

### **Calls On Officials To Cap, Contain, And Investigate**

### **Says We Need To Hold BP Accountable**

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) said today that the growing oil spill threatening our economy and quality of life needs to be capped, contained and investigated. Buchanan flew over the spill yesterday and was briefed by the U.S. Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security at the Unified Area Command in Louisiana.

“The spill is massive,” said Buchanan. “It is threatening wildlife, contaminating beaches and shutting down fisheries.”

Buchanan saw where the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico. Three weeks after the explosion, oil continues to gush from BP’s sunken rig at over 210,000 gallons a day.

“Our first priority needs to be capping the well and containing the spill,” said Buchanan. “That could take up to four months to build relief wells and stop the spill. That is too long. Our second priority should be cleaning up the spill as soon as possible. We also need to find out why this happened and make sure it doesn’t happen again.”

Approximately 10,000 personnel are working the on and offshore response, with an additional 2,500 trained volunteers. Buchanan witnessed skimming and burning activities in the Gulf on Monday.

The slick, which is expected to make landfall in Louisiana today, was still estimated by NOAA to be 100 miles from Pensacola and 340 miles from St. Petersburg.

“Our coastline is still open for business and our beaches are clean, but we need to be prepared for the pollution that could soon impact this region,” said Buchanan during a press conference at Siesta Key Public Beach in Sarasota -- the number two on "Dr. Beach" Stephen P. Leatherman's 2009 list of top 10 beaches in the nation.

Sarasota County is one of 11 Florida counties that have declared a state of emergency.

Buchanan has consistently opposed expanded drilling off Florida's Gulf Coast beaches.

“Industry experts said this couldn't happen, but I have always feared that an oil spill could badly damage our economy and environment,” added the Congressman.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has restricted offshore fishing in federal waters until May 17 and tourism has reportedly taken a hit from news reports about the oil spill.

Last week, the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform has granted a request from Congressman Vern's Buchanan's for a congressional investigation of why British Petroleum received a waiver from conducting a detailed environmental impact report at the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico.

“We need to hold BP accountable,” said Buchanan, “and make sure this doesn't happen again.”

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**Video Of The Site Of The Spill Taken By Congressman Buchanan**

